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Personal Notes

IN the Literary Department of one of our recent issues, we invited our "litterateurs" to contribute essays upon the political party to which they have given their adherence, and the reason for their choice. The competition has called attention to the number of our boys who already hold the Parliamentary franchise, and moreover are beginning to take a keen interest in public affairs. The voters' lists of townships and counties now contain the names of hundreds of young men who originated in the country as "Barnardo boys," and each year is adding largely to the number of those who have thus a direct voice in the affairs of the nation, and an influence upon the national destinies. Whether our boys as Canadian citizens will do their duty honestly and intelligently, and whether their presence will be a benefit and means of health to the body politic or the reverse, is an interesting and important question, and one that will materially affect the future of Canada. Will they be found on the side of clean, righteous and upright government, or will they strengthen those baser elements of political life that degrade government into the clever and unscrupulous manipulation of conflicting interests and foster jockeying, corruption, wire-pulling, log-rolling, the perpetration

and other abominations that cause the name of democracy to stink in the nostrils of right-minded people? Will they form their opinions intelligently, and follow the dictates of their own conscience and judgment, or will they become the puppets of party and party organizations? Will they prize the blessings of civil and religious liberty, and resist any encroachment upon those privileges under the pretext of protecting labour, fostering native industries, or any of the other disguises in which the worst forms of tyranny fasten their yoke upon professedly self-governing peoples? Will they regard their franchise as a trust committed to them, for the right fulfilment of which they are responsible as members of a Christian commonwealth to their fellow-citizens, and to the Divine Head of the state?

It would be grievous to think that as a political force in the country our boys, as they reach man's estate and become entitled to the privileges of citizenship, would exercise their power for selfish or corrupt ends. The present is a critical and important stage in the history of the country. Canada is a young country, and her political institutions are still in the early stages of maturity. She has the weather and the instability of a summer storm. It is our pro-